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ABSTRACT

Cooperation between state associations and state educational agencies depends on information transfer, individual and group process, and cooperative planning activities. Cooperative planning between the two groups can be accomplished through: (1) access to information relevant to the development of sound media programs, (2) the generation of educational information on media program, and (3) an information base of media development within each state. These objectives allow both a centralized and decentralized organization. The centralized structure on the national level is through the American Library Association and the State Assembly and State School Library/Media Supervisors Association. On the state level, the state educational agency or the state association would serve as the planning, managerial, and coordinating point for state activities. Clearinghouses help to diffuse new information in the network. Six terms translate the concepts into ideas of cooperative activities. The terms include: activities, communications, technology, individuals, organizations, and newtorks. From these six terms emerge the word--action. Action is the key word in cooperative programing between state association members and state agency personnel. (WCM)

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TOGETHER WE CAN DO IT

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As one begins to think about the topic of cooperative activities between State Associations and State Educational Agencies, one must recognize at the outset that where you sit makes a great deal of difference in how you look at the total situation. We all believe in more cooperative, supportive and creative activities which will foster better relationships. However, our problem lies in the area of planning and implementation.

Perhaps, if one had a crystal ball, one would be able to adequately predict what the major reasons for the lack of cooperative activities have been. Since I don't possess this mystical power, I have selected several items which reflect the problem as I see it. These items are:

1. Information Transfer
2. Self and Association Images
3. Cooperative Planning Activities

Each of these three components shall be briefly discussed.

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Information Transfer

In order to adequately plan for programs which will have impact upon the development of media programs, State Associations and State Educational Agencies must begin talking in constructive ways. Information has been exchanged between the members of both groups, but too often with little purpose, focus or meaning. If successful communications lines could be established, one could readily see what the other is about. However, a word of caution must be made. With the proliferation of knowledge so rapid we must not contribute tc information overload. Paralleling this concern is the need for meaningful information which will support our activities. Information transfer is no simple undertaking. For if all problems confronting mankind were arranged on a continuum from simple to complex, small to large, or any other degree of difference, communication would certainly be at or near the top of the list.

Self and Association Images

Another major issue facing Associations and State Educational Agencies is the concept of self-images. In order for both groups to

function as cooperating bodies, the respective members must understand individual and group processes.

Of one's human possessions, the "self" is the least tangible, the most vulnerable, and the most difficult to define. It changes frequently in appearance yet remains constant in form. One's self looks inward and outward -- sometimes together and in harmony, other times separately yet still in harmony, and then these same two possibilities get out of sorts with one another. Consciously or unconsciously, self presents and interprets its environment as it now exists, as is remembered from past times, and predicts the future. From our first waking moments, we are confronted with the task of establishing our own identity which allows us to cope, function and survive within our physical and social surroundings. Our self-concept forms the boundaries within which our behavior can operate.

Just as an individual has a self-concept and image, so does an organization (including both our State Associations and State Educational Agencies). This concept is actually the sum total of the existing active input sources. Each of these helps to establish the identity which allows the Associations to cope, function and survive within their own physical and social surroundings.

Another important part of self-concept is self-acceptance. This does not necessarily imply self-satisfaction, but simply indicates the importance of the awareness that strengths and weaknesses exist in varying degrees, depending upon the self-images of those individuals within the Associations. Self-acceptance implies an acceptance of others. Since they are part of environment, our self intricately reflects those we come in contact with. We cannot be constantly discontent with others and at the same time content with ourselves.

The Association self emerges from the process of social interaction of the persons who belong to the group. These persons are defining or projecting their self into the structure of the Association. Just as the Association must permit for each individual's self-identity, so must each individual allow for corporate identity. Without the working together of all involved individuals the organization cannot survive. This in no way implies that differences cannot occur; however, conflict must be resolved before progress can be made. Therefore, it is essential that individuals involved in organizational activities have a tolerance of each other's self-concept. Remember that you don't have to like their

total concept, but that you must be able to work within the constraints of their self-image. Each organization, aside from its legal existence, exists because of and reflects the sum total of its members.

We are constantly defining and reshaping our expectations of others. Likewise, others are shaping and redefining our behavior in an attempt to fulfill their self-concept. From birth, we are in constant contact with others, but we select only a few persons whom will have any significant impact in shaping our lives. Those whom we consider most important to us have the most influence upon the development of our self-concept.

Just as an individual has considerable difficulty and confusion in establishing a self-identity so does an Association. Each trying many directions, taking new approaches, ever searching for the right one which will reflect the true self. The existence of State Associations and State Educational Agencies is perpetual; so is the development of their self.

Why are so many media groups experiencing disorientation? Each time a new person or persons enter into the organizational structure, a restructuring must occur. This is quite natural. As said before, each individual must make a place for himself, his own little niche.

Yet, does the organization really provide a means whereby he can effectively accomplish this? Perhaps the newcomers' self-concept still contains a large degree of idealism without the tainted realities of life which will soon fall around their shoulders. Their enthusiastic spirit, mixed with a neophyte understanding of what has gone before, what is now occurring, and what is destined for the future, is but one cause for disorientation. The bewilderment is felt when attempts to create change are rejected. Both individuals and organizations must not reject the notion of change, nor should they move into the change cycle for change sake.

Disorientation is not all bad. When the self-concept of each individual can reorganize into one corporate identity working together for future development, then great progress can be made. Too frequently we see each member or several splinter groups pulling, pushing, and often shoving in a particular way which interests only them and is of good only for promoting themselves and not the Association or State Educational Agency. Some observers have noted three categories of members -- those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who wonder what happened. Which category do you fit into?

There is evidence that many Association members and State Educational Agency personnel are engaged in activities which are only window dressing. From outside observers they look good, but once you open the "window" and enter -- a different story is revealed. We can no longer afford to waste human resources for there is too much to be done, with too little time to do it, and with too few people to accomplish all tasks. Duplication of efforts cannot continue.

There is no protective device which can protect us from all internal or external conflicts. However, each of us has developed some type of escape mechanism which enables us to cope with our environment. No system is 100 percent accurate in allowing us to remain in complete communication with our associates. It is something that requires constant attention. Without contact, we begin to feel betrayed in our relationships with others. The world becomes threatening, and we feel isolated from our surroundings, and we feel we cannot turn to others for assistance. Polarization must be held at a minimum in order for effective programming to be accomplished.

Just as each individual must continuously redefine his self-concept to cope with changes thrust upon him, Associations and governmental agencies

must change themselves. They cannot remain static without resorting to inappropriate defense maneuvers which will eventually force them to cope with more dangerous internal and external strife. Before this strife reaches drastic proportions, re-evaluating, re-adjusting, and re-defining are essential. Remember this must be a continual process with re-cycling occurring whenever and wherever appropriate.

Since many persons are in contact with either State Associations, National Associations, or State Educational Agencies, it seems only logical that these corporate bodies should be the ones through which we attempt to alleviate the calamities affecting our profession. The educational process has contributed much to the development of our self-concept. The perspective with which we view our values and ideals was sifted through this very system. Working with the premise that State Associations and State Educational Agencies engaged in cooperative activities have a role to play in establishing effective programs for media development, it is reasonable to assume that a change in the process will effect a change in one's self-concept and the identity of the Associations and State Educational Agencies.

In order for us to further develop our activities, it is necessary for us to integrate our two groups. Improved communications would open many opportunities for sharing. Our members could be aided in becoming useful, productive, and happy individuals having a voice in the affairs of the Associations. There is no need to continue providing programs which are disengaging and fragmenting our activities from the people we are all attempting to serve. There is no evidence that the self-concept cannot be made adaptable to a change-oriented world. Talented and even less-skilled individuals should be permitted the opportunity to voice opinion as reflected through their self-identity within the confines of the Association's activities. They should also be extended the opportunity for developing and reshaping their self-concepts, thus making for more effective Association activities. Stronger and more self-confident Associations permit for greater demands to be made of State Educational Agencies.

Enough on self-identity and the organizational concept. What does all this mean? The above material presents an insight into what types of personal interaction must occur between State Agency personnel and State Association members. There are three major objectives which if

accomplished would provide more and better cooperative activities between our two groups.

Three Major Objectives:

1. To guarantee the educational community of each State, and in turn the nation, the accessibility of information relevant to the development of sound media programs.
2. To generate information (reports, research studies, conferences, and so forth) on critical educational issues which are confronting, impeding, or accelerating the growth of media programs.
3. To serve as an information base concerning significant media development within each State.

How might these three objectives be accomplished? It seems to me that the structure is already in existence -- we just haven't capitalized on it. Let us look into that mysterious crystal ball and see what an ideal situation might be. In reality, all the ball is revealing is putting together the existing puzzle pieces. The organization would be both centralized and decentralized.

1. The centralized structure on the national scene is through the American Library Association -- State Assembly and State School Library/Media Supervisors Association. It would appear that these two bodies

could serve as the planning, managerial, and coordinating point for cooperative activities affecting these two groups.

On the State level -- the State Educational Agency or Headquarters for the State Association would serve as the planning, managerial, and coordinating point for State activities.

2. Clearinghouse -- decentralized function where all Agencies would help to diffuse new information in the network. What this means is sharing what is happening both with the State Assemblies and the State Educational Agencies.
3. Program Development -- that active participation be established in carrying on Statewide conferences sponsored jointly or cooperatively by the State Association and/or the State Educational Agency. Later I will address several types of programs which can effectively be done.

In thinking about translating the above concepts into ideas of cooperative activities, six terms came to mind. Briefly, each will be discussed. Once these six terms have been explained, our program activities will have a new light shed upon them.

The first of these terms is <u>ACTIVITIES</u>. Both State Associations and State Educational Agencies must plan, develop, and implement their

own program of activities. However, each should be in tune to the other and do cooperative planning, developing and implementing wherever possible. Here are several suggestions which might work in your State. We have tried some of them in Maryland and have found success.

1. Formulate long-range plans for the development of school media programs. We are beginning a Study on the Availability and Utilization of Newer Educational Media with representation from the Media Organizations.
2. Provide resource files of persons throughout the State who are available to assist in presenting workshops, conferences, etc.
3. Develop standards and guidelines for the improvement of media programs.

   Both our Criteria for Modern School Media Programs and a new Facility Design Handbook had members from the State Organizations.
4. Provide inservice training programs on the concepts and utilization of media for administrators, supervisors, media personnel, and teachers.
5. Develop proposals for needed research in the media field.
6. Develop methods for upgrading the media profession.

   One way of doing this might be through Certification Qualifications. Recently, Maryland enacted new requirements which should provide

better trained persons coming into our schools. Another way would be inservice training programs sponsored jointly by both organizations.

7. Serve as a clearinghouse for information on media services which are of interest to the educational community.

These few possibilities are provided to stimulate your thinking.

COMMUNICATIONS is next.

Charles Galloway, nonverbal communications authority, says: "We communicate in many ways with everyone we come in contact with. Some communications are made personally, in a face-to-face relationship, while other messages are transmitted in mediated forms to persons we never see or know. What about the communication we never write or speak, yet express so well -- the nonverbal. We speak with our faces and with our gestures; we do it in the way we stand, with our postures; we do it by the way we put our desks in our offices; we do it through tactile touch, through physical contact; we do it through our eyes. We communicate in so many ways with and without words."

TECHNOLOGY.

We are all being faced, and rightfully so, with this concept.

As stated in the letter of submittal, the Commission of Instructional Technology stated that "the Commission has concerned itself with the whole gamut of instructional technology -- old, new, and future; mechanical and electronic; automated and cybernated; from innovations in print technology to computers; from classrooms to multimedia centers."

We should be looking at "technology as a whole -- as a system greater than the sum of the various media." The multiplier effect has great implications here because the total end product has greater implications than does each separate format. "Our focus" must be "on the potential use of technology to improve learning from pre-school to graduate school to adult education."

The fourth term is INDIVIDUALS.

We must always keep in mind what our real purpose is -- that of offering service and programs to meet individual needs. Too frequently we become concerned with our own egoes and what self wants and not what is the best for the profession or the organization. We must program for all levels of personnel found throughout our States. Opportunities must also be provided for students' involvement as well.

Next is ORGANIZATIONS.

Many of our State Associations are taking on new roles. Combining small groups representing media interests into one larger Association is most healthy. This larger membership base with technological interest will be able to accomplish much more than could all the existing splinter groups. The old saying "United we stand, divided we fall" certainly applies here.

If we are truly committed to effective programming for our profession, then our biases and prejudices must be buried.

Last, but not least is NETWORKS.

Some systematic plan must be established for retrieving information which is required for developing media programs. This system must be available for State use as well as national use. I see three target audiences, both internally and externally.

1. Provide information to generalized users.
2. Provide information to decision makers.
3. Provide information to colleagues.

Also closely related to the term network is cooperation. All informational services need to do cooperative activities; however, these

must be planned. Let me suggest seven items for your consideration before embarking upon any cooperative venture.

1. Philosophical framework of each body considering cooperative activities.
2. Political setting.
3. Social surroundings.
4. Economic situations.
5. Administrative organizations.
6. Legal basis for cooperative involvement.
7. Are there natural areas in which cooperative activities can be undertaken?

In looking at these six terms another word emerges -- ACTION. With this being our key word, we have direction for cooperative programming between State Association members and State Agency personnel. It is up to each member of the profession to become a proactive participant. Only through our planning together will we be able to provide effective services in light of user needs, thus enabling the media professional to make an impact upon the development of media programs.